

FROM BULLETS TO BALLOTS

# MOZAMBIQUE'S VOTE FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

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ELECTORAL  
ASSISTANCE TO  
POSTCONFLICT SOCIETIES

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# Mozambique's Vote For Democratic Governance

**A** *legacy of colonial and Marxist rule, worsened by a ruinous civil war, hardly suggested a future of self-government for this impoverished African nation. But with strong support from the international community, Mozambique has made a surprising, if tentative, transformation.*

## A Land Touched By Conflict

One of the world's poorest countries, Mozambique emerged in October 1992 from a 16-year civil war. The war displaced 4 million Mozambicans and caused 1.7 million more to flee to neighboring countries. War ravaged Mozambique's infrastructure and economy, leaving the country divided and in ruins. Elections in 1994, supervised by a United Nations peacekeeping operation, capped a two-year transition from war to peace. Run in close conjunction with the international community, the elections laid the groundwork for long-term democratic development.

*Photograph of voters waiting in line in Mozambique by Julie Bern, U.S. Agency for International Development.*

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Report written by J. Michael Turner, associate professor of Latin American and African history, Hunter College–City University of New York; Sue Nelson, democracy advisor, USAID/Cambodia; and Kimberly Mahling–Clark, senior research analyst, Research and Reference Services.

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Mozambique's history was defined by Portuguese colonization, regional competition in southern Africa, and internal competition for power. Vasco da Gama discovered Mozambique for Europe in 1498. Portugal colonized it in 1505 but exercised control over the full territory only in the latter part of the 19th century.

A century later, independence movements swept across Africa. Beginning in the 1960s, the movements led to the formation of new states in much of west and east Africa. Southern Africa was in turmoil. In Mozambique, independence movements formed and merged in 1962, becoming the anti-Portuguese Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo). A 1974 military coup in Portugal overthrew that country's government. The successor government granted Mozambique independence in 1975. Frelimo assumed the reins and established a one-party Marxist state.

Events elsewhere in southern Africa also affected Mozambique. Rhodesia's white minority government had rebelled against British rule and was itself fighting a black rebellion. Sympathetic to the black insurgents, the Frelimo government granted refuge to the Zimbabwe African National Union. Rhodesia countered by assisting in the formal consolidation of the dissident Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo) to target bases of the Zimbabwe Africa National Union in Mozambique.

When white minority rule ended in 1980 and Rhodesia became Zimbabwe, the government of South Africa took over responsibility for Renamo. Its foreign policy objective was to destabilize black-led governments on its borders and discourage them from supporting the exiled African National Congress. (Founded in 1912, the ANC is South Africa's oldest nonwhite political organization.) In 1984, the South African

government agreed to stop supplying Renamo in exchange for the ANC's closing its office in the Mozambican capital, Maputo.

In Mozambique, Renamo had more popular support than its origins would suggest. Frelimo's policies to undermine traditional authorities and church leaders, as well as its forced villagization, alienated many rural Mozambicans. Renamo's early leadership came from dissatisfied or expelled Frelimo party or military leaders.

The civil war between Renamo and the Frelimo government was at its bloodiest in 1984–86. In that period Renamo made significant advances in the central provinces, splitting the country into government-occupied and rebel-occupied territories. However, auspicious changes were already under way, laying the groundwork for peace. In 1984 Mozambique joined the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, becoming more involved in the capital economy of the West.

Changes were also under way on the political front. In 1989 the Frelimo Party congress formally rejected Marxism. The next year the government adopted a new constitution ending Frelimo's one-party monopoly and allowing multiparty elections. In late 1990 peace negotiations between Frelimo and Renamo began in Rome under the auspices of a Catholic lay organization.

By then, external involvement in the conflict had tapered off, leaving the warring parties less and less able to fight a war. The government was no longer receiving military assistance from the Soviet Union, and the South African government was no longer interested in pursuing a

foreign policy of destabilization. Renamo attacks had destroyed the government's economic and social infrastructure and left the country almost completely dependent on external assistance. Renamo had also succeeded in controlling a large portion of the countryside, cutting off Frelimo towns and provinces.

Drought in the early 1990s caused widespread crop failure and massive population movements as starving people moved to government-controlled areas for international relief. Renamo was unable to feed its soldiers, who had been subsisting on food they took from farmers. In this atmosphere of desperation, both sides recognized a decisive military victory was impossible and concentrated their efforts on the peace negotiations under way.

The General Peace Agreement was signed October 4, 1992, in Rome. The accords established the principles and methods for achieving peace. They included a cease-fire, demobilization of both armies, and formation of a new unified army before national elections to be held one year later. Also provided for was UN verification and monitoring of the political, military, electoral, and humanitarian portions of the accords. To accomplish this, the UN created the United Nations Operations in Mozambique. This peacekeeping force was headed by a special representative of the secretary general. It included 1,086 UN civilian police and 4,000 armed troops. The UN also headed most of the commissions created by the accords to implement the process. Among them was the important Commission for Supervision and Control, which oversaw implementation of the peace agreement.

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As part of the Frelimo move toward political liberalization, the 1990 constitution permitted opposition parties and multiparty elections. Elections were incorporated in the accords as an integral part of the peace process. The one-year timetable, though, proved unrealistic. Elections were ultimately held two years later.

Several practical issues caused the delay, including the amount of time required to draft and adopt an electoral law politically acceptable to both Renamo and Frelimo. Time was needed as well to create an election structure that could not only balance the two factions' competing political interests but also effectively implement national elections in a war-torn country with no history of competitive elections. Political will was also an issue. Throughout the process, both sides created deliberate delays and roadblocks. The UN secretary general had to intervene personally to effect an agreement on the electoral law. Demobilization did not take place until unhappy troops mutinied, forcing the process to proceed.

Hanging over the process was the specter of Angola's failed elections. Angola's 1992 elections were considered a technical success but a political failure, because the losing party refused to accept the results and resumed the 17-year civil war. No one wanted an Angolan end to the peace process. Overwhelmingly, Mozambicans wanted peace.

## **International Assistance**

Donors provided a comprehensive package of political, financial, and technical support for the electoral process. They helped establish an institutional framework and administration to ensure that political conditions favored success. Political parties received technical and financial assistance so they could organize and compete in the elections. Nationwide voter education programs promoted understanding and involvement. International and domestic monitoring ensured adequate verification of the process. This comprehensive, integrated assistance was essential to credible, free, and fair elections and to final acceptance of the results by the two parties.

With the assistance of the UN Development Program (UNDP), the government prepared an initial elections budget of \$76 million. Donors saw this as too expensive, but once implementation began, it became clear that the pervasive mistrust between Renamo and the Frelimo government required expensive security provisions and elaborate administrative structures. The total cost of election administration was \$64.5 million, of which \$59.1 million was provided by 17 donors. All election-related costs, including civil society voter education programs, political party trust funds, and poll-watching, probably approached \$90 million. Donors funded all of the election costs except for the government-funded electoral workers and the recurrent costs for the electoral administration. Escalating costs that required donor funding were an issue throughout the process.

The international community worked to maximize Mozambican involvement and ownership of the elections process. To *implement* the elections, though, Mozambicans needed assistance. The UNDP created an umbrella project that provided technical assistance to the Technical Secretariat for Election Administration and an electoral trust fund to channel international resources to the electoral operations. Although UNDP personnel were originally recruited to advise and train secretariat officials, they ended up doing much of the day-to-day implementation work. Renamo and Frelimo, moreover, saw them as a means to ensure balance and neutrality. By election day, 16 technical advisers aided by 43 UN volunteers were working with the secretariat at the national and provincial levels.

Assistance from the international community was also geared toward maintaining the political momentum for peace and elections. The Commission for Supervision and Control, chaired by UN special representative Aldo Ajello, included major international donors. The commission ensured international oversight and provided political support to the process. Its aggressive diplomacy was essential to keeping Renamo in the process, avoiding another slip in the elections date, and ensuring acceptance of the results by both factions. These issues preoccupied donors, who met weekly to discuss their financial and technical assistance at Aid for Democracy Group meetings. This meeting, chaired by UNDP, coordinated donor funding for the elections and tracked both the electoral budget and election progress.

The international community used donor resources as leverage to ensure continued Renamo and Frelimo participation. In May 1993, 14 donors contributed \$18 million to establish the UN Trust Fund for the Implementation of the Peace Process in Mozambique (called the Renamo Trust Fund). The purpose was to help Renamo transform into a political party and to balance Frelimo's access to public resources for elections. Renamo had to believe it could compete in the elections; otherwise, donors feared, it would return to using force.

A similar fund, the Trust Fund for Assistance to Registered Parties in Mozambique, was created in July 1994 for the 18 unarmed opposition parties (they had not participated in the civil war). This \$3 million fund was used to strengthen the organization of the other parties so they could compete in the elections more effectively.

The electoral division of the United Nations Operations in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) monitored the electoral process with representatives in every province. Their mandate included verifying the impartiality of the National Elections Commission and election administration; ensuring access of political parties to the media; monitoring the level of freedom of the parties to organize, travel, and campaign; and implementing the electoral process, to include computing the results. The 150 international staff (100 of which were UN volunteers) grew to 2,350 to observe the voting. Initially 1,200 international election observers were planned, most of whom could have been recruited from within Mozam-

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bique and the UN civilian force. In the end, though, political concerns that the international observation effort be meaningful and visible caused UNOMOZ to increase the number from member states, the European Union, and locally recruited expatriates.

The elections, however were a Mozambican process, and UNOMOZ electoral actions were limited to process monitoring. Both the peace accords and the electoral law limited verification of voter registration and voting to national observers from political parties. To ensure that enough poll watchers were present during the voting and counting so that the results could not be challenged by either Renamo or Frelimo, the international community developed and helped carry out a nationwide poll-watching program.

This successful program was a good example of the close donor coordination that existed throughout the process. The UNOMOZ electoral division developed the plan, and USAID financed its execution through the International Organization for Migration (for logistics) and CARE International and the International Republican Institute (for training). With only two weeks' notice, the International Organization for Migration, which was also carrying out the demobilization reintegration program, used its nationwide network to transport 30,000 poll watchers from 19 parties to regional training sessions. It also paid them and transported them to the polls on voting days. As a result of this assistance, at least four trained monitors from different political parties were present at every polling station nationwide for all three days of voting.

## **Conducting Elections**

The National Elections Commission was formally established in January 1994 to implement the elections. It was given a broad range of powers and responsibilities by both the peace accords and the electoral law. These included ensuring the freedom and transparency of the elections, registering party coalitions, adjudicating complaints, and validating and declaring the results. Its primary limitations were that none of its decisions could contradict provisions in the peace accords and that all decisions had to be made by consensus.

The commission was autonomous and independent. However, it was politically balanced, with members divided among Frelimo, Renamo, and the unarmed opposition parties. It was the formula for determining the commission's political balance that held up agreement on the government-drafted electoral law for almost a year. Ultimately, the UN secretary general intervened to resolve the matter. The balance ended up with 10 Frelimo, 7 Renamo, 3 unarmed opposition, and one president selected by the commission. The members unanimously selected as their president Brazão Mazula, a Mozambican scholar without party affiliation. Two vice presidents were chosen, one each from Renamo and Frelimo.

The deep mistrust between the two parties also required that the Technical Secretariat be politically balanced, even though it was for technical administration. Its 25

members were divided among the parties, with a director general appointed by the Mozambican president. It too had two vice presidents, one each from Renamo and Frelimo.

Both institutions had three layers of organization: national, provincial, and district. Their political balance was repeated at each level, making the electoral apparatus excessively heavy. Decision-making in both institutions was slow and politicized. The election administration alone had 2,600 officials and 8,000 registrars.

Party affiliation permeated commission actions and decisions. But the endless debates and the need to reach consensus transformed the election commission from a group of inexperienced partisan politicians into an institution, working together toward a shared electoral goal. The most important factor in the ability of the commission to produce results was the presence of the commission president. His leadership and neutrality kept the process on track. However, the commission's legalistic approach and its strict application of the rules it developed were too inflexible for conditions in Mozambique.

The Technical Secretariat for Election Administration did not experience the same transformation as the National Elections Commission. By the end of the process, the secretariat was far more politicized than the commission. It also suffered from a lack of professional experience, poor management, and frequent absences, owing in part to low government salaries. This lack of institutional capacity created many

avoidable problems, including strikes by electoral workers for back pay. Consequently, elections required more active participation of UNDP technical experts and lower level election administration staff.

In this context, and without vehicles or operating funds for registrars, voter registration started as scheduled, on June 1. The country was still physically divided between Frelimo and Renamo. UN troops and civilian police were stationed in major cities and along the vital railways, but they were not initially used to ensure that other areas were accessible. This made opening offices for the commission and the secretariat in Renamo areas difficult, inasmuch as electoral and registration workers were hesitant to enter Renamo zones without armed escorts. Once armed UN peacekeepers reached these areas, however, workers were able to enter and work freely. Because of the delays getting into Renamo areas, and the high number of refugees and demobilized soldiers returning to their home areas for planting, registration was extended from August 15 to September 2. Although the extension forced a reduction in the number of days for the political campaign, it enabled an additional 363,000 voters to be registered.

A total of 6.3 million voters were registered. That represented 81 percent of the adult population, estimated at 7.8 million. In all, voter registration was considered a success. It provided needed credibility for the electoral process, increasing the confidence of both international donors and Mozambicans in the prospects for free and fair elections.

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**The Technical Secretariat conducted a comprehensive voter education program to increase knowledge and build trust in the elections.**

Given Mozambique's high illiteracy rate (67 percent) and the lack of previous experience with democratic, multiparty elections, voter education preoccupied the Technical Secretariat and the international community. With assistance from UNDP advisers and the American-based National Democratic Institute, the Technical Secretariat conducted a comprehensive voter education program to increase knowledge and build trust in the elections. A National Democratic Institute study found that peace (along with food), not elections, was the most important issue for Mozambicans. Consequently, voter education campaigns, including those conducted by churches and other civil society organizations, linked elections with peace. With the country polarized between Renamo and Frelimo, voter education also emphasized that elections would provide choices and that the vote was secret.

Twelve candidates ran for president, and 14 parties and coalitions competed for the national assembly, called the Assembly of the Republic. Most of the parties signed a code of conduct that laid out the rules for a fair and nonviolent election campaign. UNOMOZ arranged several signings of the same code of conduct at the provincial and district level. The multiple signings ensured that the concept of fair play reached beyond the capital.

The campaign ran from September 22 to October 24. Most campaigns consisted of public rallies and the distribution of party T-shirts and posters, although both Joaquim Chissano (the incumbent) and Afonso

Dhlakama (the resistance challenger) went on national tours. The campaign period was generally peaceful, though a number of rock-throwing and poster-ripping incidents disrupted Renamo rallies. UNOMOZ received only 29 complaints during the campaign. None of the incidents reported was serious enough to disrupt the process.

The electoral law guaranteed equal access to the state media, with free radio and television time for candidates. But Renamo and the unarmed parties lacked the experience to take full advantage of these opportunities. As the sitting president, Chissano used the media skillfully, turning official events into prime-time campaign coverage. The state-run press was noticeably pro-Frelimo and criticized the resistance for alleged violations of the peace accords. For its part, Renamo established its own magazine and radio station, which it used to criticize the Frelimo government. Despite frequent press reports of accusations by the political parties of electoral malfeasance, no official complaints were made to either the Elections Commission or UNOMOZ on the media campaign.

Members of Frelimo, as the party in power, had access to government resources, both human and material. Candidates used those resources extensively for their campaigns. According to a U.S. State Department report, they also used government powers to coerce campaign contributions from local businessmen. The need to create a more level playing field was one of the major reasons for creation of the trust funds for Renamo and other registered parties.

The month before the elections, tensions mounted. Electoral workers threatened to strike over salaries. The Renamo presidential candidate, Dhlakama, accused Frelimo of planning massive electoral fraud. He announced he would not accept the results if he lost several key provinces. Dhlakama's statement raised the already high level of political tensions and mistrust within the National Elections Commission and Technical Secretariat. The Association of Demobilized Soldiers threatened to disrupt the elections unless they received money. Hostage-taking increased. The police demanded extra pay for guarding the polling sites and ballot boxes. Private security services proliferated. Directly violating the peace agreement, the government transferred a significant amount of arms and men from the military to the police. All these issues raised concerns of an Angolan-style end to the electoral process.

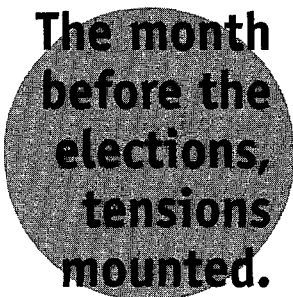
To keep the process from deteriorating further, the UN secretary general announced that the essential conditions for the holding of free and fair elections had been met. The Security Council said it would endorse the results if UNOMOZ declared the elections free and fair. This was supported by a communiqué from of a summit meeting of the leaders of the former so-called frontline states (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), who said they would take appropriate and timely action if the situation demanded.

Elections were scheduled for October 27–28, 1994. To get the elections in before the rainy season

required a very compressed timetable and extensive reliance on costly helicopter transport. However, the preparations were completed, most ballots delivered, the poll workers trained, and the international observers deployed when late on October 26, Renamo announced it was withdrawing. It claimed fraud. The announcement created tremendous uncertainty about the elections and the peace process.

The National Elections Commission unanimously rejected Renamo's claim, demonstrating the extent of its institutional transformation. International groups put strong pressure on Renamo to rejoin the process. The UN Security Council appealed directly to Dhlakama, as did the presidents of South Africa and Zimbabwe. The secretary general of the United Nations announced that the elections would go ahead as planned. After the Commission for Supervision and Control provided a written guarantee that it would closely monitor the elections, and an additional \$1 million incentive was added to the Renamo Trust Fund, early on October 28 Renamo agreed to continue with the process.

Despite Renamo's boycott, turnout on the first day was high. The notoriously poor nature of Mozambique's communications actually helped. It prevented most voters from knowing about Renamo's action. With the exception of a few urban areas, Renamo poll watchers and electoral workers showed up to work even if they *had* heard about the boycott. The threatened disruptions by demobilized soldiers never materialized, and voting was quiet and peaceful. A third day was added to the voting to make up for the day Renamo lost



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through its boycott, but it was not really needed. In all, 87 percent of the registered voters cast ballots, with 60–70 percent voting on the first day.

Observers noted the dedication and professionalism of the 52,000 poll workers, who closely and impartially followed procedures. The atmosphere was open and free. The indelible ink called for in the election law to eliminate the possibility of someone voting twice was applied correctly, and voters proudly displayed their inked fingers. Ballot boxes were sealed at the end of each day and verified at the start of the next. In some cases, national observers slept with the ballot boxes. The police, who had received an elections pay supplement from the government and who were observed by almost a thousand UN civilian police officers, guarded the polling sites and ballot materials without problems.

Votes were counted at the end of the third day. The primary problem resulted from a directive from the National Elections Commission that accepted only marks made inside the candidate checkoff box as valid votes. Marks placed outside the box, even if obviously intended for a certain candidate, were invalid. Discussions between counters and monitors over what constituted a valid ballot had only a minor effect on the outcome, but they slowed down the counting and tally process at both the table and national levels.

Although individual polling site results were posted outside each site as mandated by the electoral law, the release of official results was very slow. Donors exerted pressure, but the Elections Commission delayed releasing partial results until November 7. Renamo and Frelimo represen-

tatives of both the Technical Secretariat and the Elections Commission insisted on double-checking totals with tally sheets. That required a time-consuming nationwide collection of materials and multiple recounting of more than 250,000 contested and null ballots. Renamo delayed certifying the final tally sheet for another 10 days. But when the Elections Commission finally announced the official results on November 19, they were accepted by all.

## **Election Outcome**

The system devised by Renamo and Frelimo ensured adequate representation for themselves but limited opportunities for the other parties. The proportional system for the national assembly election required a 5 percent national threshold. This meant that parties needed 5 percent of the national vote to win a seat even if they were competing in only one province.

Joaquim Chissano, the Frelimo incumbent, won the presidential elections with 53 percent of the vote. The Renamo candidate, Afonso Dhlakama, received 33 percent of the vote. Renamo won 38 percent (112 seats) of the legislative seats against 44 percent for Frelimo (129 seats) and 5 percent for a small third-party coalition, the Democratic Union (9 seats).

Renamo won a solid majority in 5 out of Mozambique's 10 provinces, including the 2 most populous provinces, Zambézia and Nampula. All were areas where the resistance

had been active in the civil war. Frelimo won the south and the two northernmost provinces, the party's traditional strongholds. Though the regional pattern was striking, no indications surfaced of ethnically motivated voting. Speculation was widespread that the Democratic Union's gains resulted from the party's placement on the *legislative* ballot corresponding to Chissano's position on the *presidential* ballot.

Although Renamo complained of fraud and discrimination throughout the process (with the deliberate intent, some believe, of discrediting the entire process), the party agreed to abide by the results. It claimed credit for forcing the first democratic multiparty elections and for bringing democracy to Mozambique. The pro-Renamo newspaper *Diário de Moçambique* remarked the elections had marked Renamo's transformation from an armed struggle movement into a "full-fledged political party."

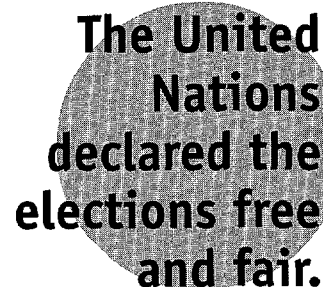
Frelimo also accepted the results, relieving concerns of the international community that the party might reject them. Hard-liners within the Frelimo central committee, who had thought they were unbeatable both militarily and politically, accused Chissano of giving away the country to Renamo. Before the elections, both Renamo and Frelimo had rejected calls for the creation of a government of national unity. As a gesture toward reconciliation, though, Chissano offered to create a position for Dhlakama within the government with special status "as a necessary innovation to be introduced into the political customs and practices of the country." Dhlakama refused.

The international community accepted that the electoral process was marred by procedural problems (most caused by logistical difficulties or lack of training) but found no major irregularities that would have affected the outcome of the vote. The UNOMOZ tally was close to the official results, and the United Nations declared the elections free and fair.

## Consequences

The elections transformed the country from a one-party state to a democratically elected multiparty government with broad-based legitimacy. It ended 16 years of brutal civil war and turned the warring factions from settling disputes by force to battling with words. Human rights abuses stemming from the civil conflict ended. Basic freedoms, included in the 1990 constitution but never protected, were tested in the political campaign, even in the state-owned media. Opposition parties were able to organize, register, and compete in the elections without interference. And for the first time, the people were able to change their government by democratic means, voting freely and without intimidation.

The elections were significant for the legitimacy they bestowed on Mozambique's political system. The issue of governmental legitimacy and popular acceptance of Frelimo's rule had been one of the major problems addressed during the two-year peace negotiations. Renamo, and other elements of the national opposition, demanded a process that would give



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legitimacy to a national administration. The peace accords provided Renamo with recognition as a political party. At the same time, they occasioned Renamo's acceptance of the authority of the Frelimo government. But it was the democratic multiparty elections that cemented true legitimacy for both sides.

Frelimo's victory in the national assembly served to continue the tensions between that party and Renamo. Rejecting the idea of a government of national unity, Frelimo argued that it was abiding by the election results, which gave it control of both the executive and legislative branches. Renamo demanded the authority to nominate governors in the provinces it had won, but the idea was rejected by Frelimo. The victors asserted the right to nominate all provincial governors.

The recent history of the Assembly of the Republic is a barometer of a slowly developing democratic culture. For example, an unpromising inaugural session that ended in a deadlock over the selection process for the president of the assembly has, over time, evolved into an increasing ability of all three parties to negotiate and debate. That initial deadlock proved that old tactics designed to guarantee party loyalty and dominate the legislative branch needed to be revised within the context of multiparty democracy.

For the political opposition, it was clear that simply to abandon the institution to the majority party was also ineffective in constructing democratic institutions. If such institutions were to develop, it would be necessary to engage the party in power, to discuss, debate, and make alliances

so that the legislative branch could function.

In its first year of activity, the multiparty legislature slowly sought its own institutional voice and personality. In the assembly's decision to reject decentralization proposed by the executive, alliances were formed between members of the opposition and majority parties. Displaying an ability to compromise and bargain, the legislators began to put national interests before party labels. Regional interests and geographic identities began to emerge and rival party identification. Legislators from Zambézia province, for example, are increasingly advocating legislation seen to be favorable to their home turf on a bipartisan or nonpartisan basis.

The legislature appears to be the branch of government most directly affected by Mozambique's recent democratization. Many newly elected Frelimo members, like some recent ministerial appointments, brought with them significant technocratic skills and experience. These technocrats are more likely to assume more conciliatory positions toward like-minded opposition members than the hard-liners who orchestrated Frelimo's socialist past.

For Renamo, the minority position within the assembly created new opportunities but with certain unexpected consequences for the party. The Renamo legislators have a specific professional identity and purpose that differentiates them from the rest of the party leadership. That Renamo's leader, Dhlakama, is not in the assembly has contributed to a growing independence among Renamo legislators. They at times

express personal positions on issues that do not always mirror the position of the party leadership.

This trend of self-assurance among certain members of the assembly is particularly important, given a constitutional tradition that placed substantial authority in the executive. The new changes in the legislature are salubrious signs of institutional development and maturity.

Political life in Mozambique after the transition continues to be characterized by a process dominated by Frelimo and Renamo. Renamo's leadership within the opposition remains unchallenged. No serious movement toward unification has risen among the smaller parties. The small Democratic Union coalition in the assembly, and the various Mozambican opposition parties that were unable to elect members to the legislature, exist precariously. They operate in an environment in which discourse and debate are the privilege of political parties with access to financial resources. The parties not represented in the assembly briefly attempted to form a political union. Its purpose was to monitor parliamentary debate and use the media to propose alternative strategies. But charges of misuse of contributions by certain members undercut the coalition's image and efficacy.

Internal dissension and charges of financial improprieties within certain parties have not enhanced the public image of Mozambique's political opposition. The opposition has advocated early local elections as a means to challenge the government for political space and influence. Such elections, the opposition hopes, would also encourage new interna-

tional support from donors interested in supporting a more inclusive environment for Mozambican political parties.

The technical capacity of the country's electoral institutions, seriously tested during the 1994 elections, has not received significant attention or support since the 1994 elections. The follow-on Technical Secretariat, established in April 1995, has not sought to keep the voter registration lists up to date by registering new voters. Provincial registries and documentation have been sitting in a warehouse in Maputo. Reports circulate about the pilfering and disappearance of vehicles and office equipment belonging to the secretariat. The lamentable state of document preservation and storage has led USAID and UNDP to renew technical assistance to the secretariat. They seek to preserve the valuable registries and documentation required for the upcoming municipal elections.

It is unfortunate that the enthusiasm generated in 1994 and the willingness of election officials and political party monitors to continue working for better governance and democratization have not been better tapped and utilized by the government. International donors and national civil society institutions alike acknowledge the need for extensive civic education programs. This human resource capacity represented a large financial and material investment and should not be allowed to dissipate. Rebuilding civic education programs from ground zero will prove very costly.

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constitution does not mention them, yet they play legitimate and important roles in local governance and dispute resolution. The current disjuncture between traditional authority and modern political power is complicated by historical fact. Portuguese colonial leaders long used traditional authorities to organize labor forces and collect taxes, yet they often supported leaders put forward by different groups. Unfortunately, the colonialists did not understand the difference and gave labor-collection and tax-collection assignments to these illegitimate rulers, who developed their own brand of legitimacy, backed up by colonial authority. While the people know their local rulers, there can be multiple claimants to the title "traditional authority."

The Ministry of State Administration, with international assistance, is conducting research in an attempt to clarify this murky and controversial topic. New municipal legislation that redefines the role of traditional authorities within an effectively decentralized municipal administration is being studied by the national assembly. A national conference on traditional authorities is also scheduled for April 1997.

Democratization is also hampered by weaknesses in Mozambique's judiciary system. The country's systemic problems of poverty, illiteracy, and inadequate educational opportunities have led to a civil service in which the majority of workers have not completed a secondary school education, an institutional profile that also characterizes the judiciary. Inadequately trained judges, prosecutors, and law clerks, together with a financially strapped Ministry of Justice (often unable to

provide copies of new legislation and laws to the country's magistrates) has come to mean that rule of law in Mozambique is at best a precarious concept.

Strengthening civil society involves an independent press and electronic media. At the time the peace agreement was signed, in 1992, the sole example of a regular, independent news outlet within the country was *Mediafax*, a daily faxed news sheet. But the liberalization called for by the accords signaled an important development: newspapers, news magazines, and radio outlets began springing up throughout Mozambique. Created by some of the government's foremost former official journalists, the new media used the greater freedom provided under the 1990 constitution and subsequent legislation to express opinions and ideas as well as to report facts. Though the independent media are nascent and fragile, they were strengthened somewhat by the 1994 multiparty campaign and new electoral process. Covering these phenomena created new demands on and opportunities for the country's news outlets.

Important too was the role played by Mozambican religious groups in fashioning civic education programs and initiatives to conform to local dialects and cultural differences. The ability of religious groups to promote civil society and voter education was vital. Both Christian and Muslim organizations brought home to their members the importance of participating in the country's first democratic elections.

Mozambique's emergent civil society organizations are an impor-

tant outcome of the 1994 electoral process. Increased freedom of expression and freedom of association have enabled these groups, as well as members of the political opposition, to criticize government more directly, to put forward alternative policies and policy options, and to advocate for their interests.

In examining Mozambique's reconciliation process, we find that successful implementation of the peace accords rested on three linked activities: demobilization, formation of an integrated army, and the holding of democratic, multiparty presidential and legislative elections. Demobilization and resettlement of ex-combatants occurred only after many delays. The international community, witness to the ongoing tragedy in Angola, insisted that demobilization occur before elections. Given Mozambique's dependence on foreign aid, the role played by donors in securing full demobilization before the elections was a prominent factor.

Establishing reintegration programs for ex-combatants was problematic, but it ultimately did occur. The international community provided four limited programs for the demobilized soldiers: the Reintegration Support Scheme (a small monthly stipend over two years), the Information and Referral Service, the Provincial Fund (for small projects or microenterprise), and the Occupational Skills Development Program. The programs had a positive effect, but the crucial factor in the ex-soldiers' reintegration seems to have been simply the passage of time.

Repatriation of refugees and of the internally displaced proceeded with

alacrity after the accords were signed. Data from the U.S. Committee for Refugees indicate there were 1.7 million refugees in neighboring countries at the end of 1992. The number fell to 1.3 million by the end of 1993, and 325,000 by the end of 1994. All indications are that all refugees who want to return to Mozambique have in fact done so. The UN High Commission on Refugees ended its repatriation and reintegration program in July 1996, considering its job completed.

As with combatant reintegration, refugee reintegration programs helped contribute to peace by helping rebuild a rural economy shattered by war. Reintegration programs for ex-combatants, refugees, and internally displaced persons helped rebuild communities and reestablish economic activity. Rebuilding the economy is a major factor in maintaining peace over the long term as much as successful elections were in the short term.

## Lessons Learned

*1. The reconciliation process can take longer than expected.*

*In postcrisis situations, the government needs to allow enough time for former warring factions to make necessary compromises, but it should ensure that the process does not go on indefinitely. Creating a mutually acceptable framework for peace and elections, and building a climate that enabled the former belligerents to accept the results of a free and fair election, took longer than expected. The peace agreement took two years to negotiate. The elections took a*

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year longer than the timetable agreed on in the peace accords because both parties argued over the political composition of the National Elections Commission and Technical Secretariat for Election Administration. But the result was a politically acceptable and viable legal framework suited to Mozambique's polarized politics.

*The government should allow enough time for refugees and displaced persons to return home before voter registration and elections take place.* After the 1992 cease-fire, small numbers of refugees and the internally displaced started returning. As the cease-fire held into 1994, they returned in greater numbers. The one-year delay in elections and holding the elections at the end of the dry season meant that most refugees and displaced persons were home in time to register. Because voters were required to vote where they registered, holding registration after the large population movements were over avoided disenfranchising significant portions of the electorate.

*2. Transition elections are more likely to succeed if . . .*

*. . . They are part of a comprehensive peace plan.* The elections in Mozambique were part of a comprehensive peace agreement, UN peace-keeping operation, and international assistance program. Demobilization, reintegration of former combatants, humanitarian assistance, and active monitoring by the international community created the conditions for successful elections.

*. . . The peace plan includes agreement on the most contentious issues.* It was important that most of the potentially controversial points, such as demobilization, were ad-

dressed during the peace accords, rather than after. This limited the number of unresolved critical issues that would surface during implementation. Once implementation began and large sums of money were provided, the international community acquired a vested interest in the success of the elections. Sensing this, the two major parties would have been more likely to adopt intransigent negotiating positions.

*. . . They are perceived as legitimate by the main signatories to the peace accords.* The peace agreement was deemed legitimate by the two warring factions and was used as the basis to resolve all disputes. None of the issues already resolved in the accords were reopened. That kept the process on a forward track. The electoral law and institutions adopted were also seen as legitimate. This ultimately resulted in the acceptance of the election results and in broad-based legitimacy for the newly elected government.

*. . . Demobilization is completed before elections are held.* The army was demobilized and a new united army created before the elections took place. This contributed to the one-year delay in the elections but forced both sides to complete the process and abide by the election results. Reintegration assistance to ex-combatants eased their transition into civilian life and reduced the potential for electoral losers to use unhappy and unemployed ex-combatants to destabilize the postelection period.

*. . . Closed areas are opened as soon as possible.* Access to Renamo-controlled territory was difficult, and Frelimo election workers were afraid to enter some areas. Although access improved over time, an earlier

opening of closed areas through the deployment of UNOMOZ troops and UN civilian police could have reduced delays and implementation problems.

*3. The politically acceptable system increased the likelihood of a successful election, but it . . .*

*. . . Was inefficient and gave rise to significant costs.* The electoral mechanism developed in Mozambique led to elections accepted as free and fair, but it was extremely cumbersome and expensive. Having two separate but parallel electoral institutions (the Elections Commission and the Technical Secretariat) doubled the costs of administering the elections and slowed decision-making and implementation. In addition, the extensive security features required to make the process politically acceptable (such as watermarked ballot paper and photo registration cards) were expensive.

*. . . Politicized the technical administration.* By requiring political balance not only at the policymaking level (the Elections Commission) but also at the technical level (the Technical Secretariat), the system politicized routine electoral administration. Given the depth of mistrust, a depoliticized election administration for these transition elections would have been difficult to obtain. However, a depoliticized election administration would have simplified implementation and could have provided a better foundation for a permanent electoral administration.

*. . . Resulted in a rigid interpretation of the electoral law and inflexible instructions.* All decisions taken by the Elections Commission and the

Technical Secretariat were the result of heated discussions and political compromise. In order for implementation not to deviate from their political agreement, specific directives were issued that did not allow for local problem-solving. The Elections Commission directive that the only valid mark on a ballot was one made within the small check-off box for each candidate created many problems. Counters ended up nullifying ballots where voter intentions were clear even though their mark missed the box.

*. . . Excluded civil society.* The Elections Commission and the Technical Secretariat were made up of political party representatives, although the commission president was independent. Domestic election monitoring was also limited to parties. This partisan makeup ensured acceptance of the results, but it eliminated the participation of civil society from all aspects of the elections except for voter education in service as poll workers on an individual basis. Outside of politically affiliated organizations, probably only religious organizations had the capacity and interest to undertake a significant poll-watching effort. However, they could serve as monitors only if they worked through a political party.

*4. A neutral presence is important in a highly polarized political environment.*

Neutral organizations and individuals played important mediation, facilitation, and monitoring roles throughout the process from the initial negotiations of the peace agreement through to the announcement of the official results.

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The presence of the UNOMOZ electoral division and its willingness to investigate any complaint, regardless of its plausibility, ensured transparency and built confidence in the process. Renamo and Frelimo both used the UNDP technical experts within the Technical Secretariat as neutral buffers throughout election preparations. Continued monitoring by the international community, and the international community's funding of the more expensive security measures, reassured participants that the process was not being manipulated by the other side.

The nonpartisan president of the Elections Commission and his balanced mediation between Renamo and Frelimo helped transform the commission into an institutional body, able to reach consensus on even the most difficult issues. His dedication to the holding of free and fair elections kept the commission and the electoral process on track.

*5. International assistance was essential. The elections would not have happened without the support of the international community.*

*Assistance should be comprehensive and coordinated.* The international community provided an integrated package of political, technical, humanitarian, and electoral assistance. This was critical to ensuring that all aspects of the peace accords were carried out. Elections were treated not as a separate event but as an integral part of the peace process. UN supervision and coordination of peace accord monitoring allowed for rapid and integrated action by the international community. In addition, the coordination of election donors through the

Aid for Democracy meetings ensured that funding gaps were covered and that donors presented a united front when necessary.

*Donors have to remain committed until the end.* As the election process dragged on longer than expected, costs escalated. Without continuing donor commitments to cover the prolonged costs of the peacekeeping operations (estimated at \$1 million a day) and the additional election costs, the elections would not have taken place.

*Donor resources create leverage.* Mozambique's reliance on donor funding provided the international community with leverage to make sure the process succeeded. In addition, the Renamo Trust Fund not only enabled Renamo to participate as a political party but also served as a financial incentive for the party to join and then stay in the process.

*International technical assistance can safeguard implementation of free and fair elections.* The election administration was polarized and, at times, paralyzed by its political composition. The presence of international technical experts, and their willingness to get more involved, ensured that the administration continued to carry out the elections. Their presence and active participation also limited the possibilities for systemic fraud.

*Postelection assistance was required to preserve the investment made in the electoral system and structures.* Despite the peacemaking objective of these elections, the international community should have taken better measures to ensure the

sustainability of their investments. The equipment, voter registration roles, and institutional knowledge needed to be preserved for the follow-on Technical Secretariat and future elections. This is being done now through a renewal of technical assistance to the secretariat, but immediate action following the elections could have saved time, money, and effort.

*6. Peacekeeping elections are expensive.*

The Mozambican elections were very expensive. Some of the inflated costs, such as the heavy reliance on costly helicopter transport, were avoidable. But many of the other expensive features were required to satisfy the pervasive mistrust.

Where possible, the use of existing structures is recommended. The national monitoring program was developed and implemented quickly and for minimal costs, using the assistance structures already in place from the nationwide demobilization program.

Financial incentives were used extensively throughout the process. They were expensive, but they kept Renamo in the process. They also ensured that 50,000 political party monitors showed up on election day (20,000 more than expected) to provide the critical national verification of the result. The incentives created a momentum and ensured that the process, once started, kept going through to completion.

*7. The electoral system allowed for adequate representation by the major parties, but the national-level thresh-*

*old in effect eliminated the smaller parties.*

The 5 percent threshold eliminated all of the unarmed opposition parties, except for the Democratic Union's coalition, whose win was accidental. A threshold based on provincial votes, rather than national votes, would have provided more opportunities for regionally based opposition parties to win seats in the national assembly.

*8. Don't underestimate the voters.*

Voters wanted peace. Elections were seen as a means to that end. To make sure each side received something from the elections, most citizens split their vote between Renamo and Frelimo, voting one party for president and the other for the assembly. This forced a degree of power sharing into the winner-take-all system constructed between Renamo and Frelimo in the peace accords. By ensuring that Renamo won a strong minority, the voters placed the party within the constitutional framework, rather than keeping it outside.

*9. Multiparty elections in former one-party states require political party assistance.*

Mozambique lacked viable opposition parties. At the signing of the peace accords, Renamo was an armed guerrilla movement, and the unarmed opposition parties were based on individuals without party structures or members. Donors provided resources so they could organize and compete. Without the Renamo Trust Fund, Renamo could not have competed in the elections. Renamo was transformed from a

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politicomilitary group to a political party capable of undertaking a national electoral campaign and then serving in the assembly. The transformation was key to the success of the peace process.

The unarmed opposition parties however, tended to play a spoiler role. Their trust fund, which provided equal amounts to all parties regardless of size or credibility, discouraged the coalition-building required to reach the 5 percent threshold.

*10. Transition elections are only a first step toward democratic development.*

Elections as part of a peacekeeping operation can be a means to complete the transition from war to peace. This is a difficult endeavor, however.

In the case of Mozambique, the two warring factions had to come to mutually acceptable agreements, accept the election results, and not return to war. The process was not open and participatory. The unarmed

opposition parties were allowed to compete but had no role in designing or executing the election process and were not a real factor. Civil society was excluded from monitoring the elections. The parties reserved for themselves the right to challenge the election results.

Nevertheless, elections laid the groundwork for democratic development. Opposition parties registered and competed. Poll workers and monitors were trained. The poll-watching program gave political parties a core of trainers and nationwide monitors that could be the basis for true party development. Civil society undertook voter education programs and now know that elections can bring peaceful change.

But the legal and institutional framework for these peacekeeping elections was transitional. With a democratically elected government in place, appropriate and permanent legislation and institutional bodies must now be developed to continue the move toward genuine democratic development.